

The Book of Micah

The Author, Title and Date of Micah

1. Title: Named for its author whose name is a shortened version of Michaiah which means “who is like Jehovah.”
2. Author: Micah a native of Moresheth in Judah, 25 miles SW of Judah., an agricultural area. Micah prophesied during the reigns of Jotham (750-731 B.C.) , Ahaz (731-715 B.C.) and Hezekiah (715-686 B.C.). He is also a contemporary of Hosea (ca. 755-710 B.C.) and Isaiah (ca. 739-690 B.C.) . Beyond this little is known about him. Micah was anointed by God (3:8). Micah is one of 12 “minor” prophets
3. Date: 735-710 B.C.

The Background and Setting of Micah

Historical Context – an Overview of The Prophets of the Old Testament

1. 4 Major Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel
2. 12 Minor Prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.
3. The writings of the Minor Prophets spanned from the mid 7th century B.C. to the 3rd century.
(The following table is from the MacArthur Study Bible’s Introduction to the Prophets)

PROPHETS ORGANIZED BY DATE AND DIRECTION OF MINISTRY

Prophet	Ministered To	In the Years	Prophet	Ministered To	In the Years
Obadiah	Edom	850–840 B.C.	Zephaniah	Judah	635–625 B.C.
Joel	Judah	835–796 B.C.	Jeremiah	Judah	627–570 B.C.
Jonah	Nineveh	784–760 B.C.	Habakkuk	Judah	620–605 B.C.
Amos	Israel	763–755 B.C.	Daniel	Babylon	605–536 B.C.
Hosea	Israel	755–710 B.C.	Ezekiel	Babylon	593–570 B.C.
Isaiah	Judah	739–680 B.C.	Haggai	Judah	520–505 B.C.
Micah	Judah	735–710 B.C.	Zechariah	Judah	520–470 B.C.
Nahum	Nineveh	650–630 B.C.	Malachi	Judah	437–417 B.C.

4. Prior to their ministries, in the previous century Israel enjoy a high degree of peace and prosperity under Kings David and Solomon.
5. The Divided Kingdoms (Israel in the north, Judah in the south) experienced many more problems and some successes.
6. Israel divided into two Kingdoms in about 930 B.C. The Northern Kingdom (Israel) existed as an independent state until 722 B.C. when it was conquered by the Assyrians Empire. The Southern Kingdom existed as an independent state until 588 B.C. when it was conquered by the Babylonian Empire.
7. Powerful empires developed and fought for control of the region. These would include Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon.
8. Warfare in the ancient world typically included the burning of villages, the murder of entire groups of people, rape, and enslavement.
9. During this period the Jewish nation was generally weak and powerless.
10. During Micha’s ministry three kings were in power :
 Jotham (750-731 B.C.) reigned for 16 years (750-735 B.C.) “did what was right in the sight of the Lord.”
 Ahaz (731-715 B.C.) reigned for 16 years (731-715 B.C.) “did not do what was right in the sight of the Lord.”
 Hezekiah (715-686 B.C.) reigned for 29 years (715-686 B.C.) “did what was right in the sight of the Lord.”

Under the difficult circumstances of these times the Jews should have learned to trust God’s grace and protection.

The Purpose of Micah

To speak out against injustices in Israel and Samaria

To rebuke the religious and national leaders for their spiritual bankruptcy

God desires not only personal holiness, but social righteousness and justice

Micah records a glorious future when God will gather His people in the Kingdom ruled by the Messiah.

Themes in the Book of Micah

Those Indicted by GOD – 1:2; 3:1; 3:5; 3:9; 6:2-3

Judgment - 1:6-7; 10:16-17; 2:3; 3:4; 3:6-7, 3:12; 4:10; 5:3, 5; 6:13-14

God's Character - 1:2; 1:3-4, 2:3; 2:12-13, 3:6-7 and 12; 4:6-8 and 10, 4:12 5:3-5; 5:10-15; 6:4-5; 6:13-16, 7:7-8; 7:10-13; 7:14; 7:15-17; 7:18; 7:19; 7:20

Hope/Restoration of the Faithful – 2:12-13; 4:1-13; 5:2-5; 7:7-13, 7:14-20

Idolatry – 1:5; 1:7; 5:13-14; 6:6

Day of the Lord/Last Days – 4:1; 4:6; 5:3a; 5:7-8; 5:11

The Structure of Chronicles (MacArthur)

I. Superscription (1:1)

II. God Gathers to Judge and Deliver (1:2-2:13) (Oracle 1)

A. Samaria and Judah Punished (1:2-16)

B. Oppressors Judged (2:1-5)

C. False Prophets Renounced (2:6-11)

D. Promise of Deliverance (2:12-13)

III. God Judges Rulers and Comes to Deliver (3:1-5:15) (Oracle 2)

A. The Contemporary Leaders are Guilty (3:1-12)

B. The Coming Leader Will Deliver and Restore (4:1-5:15)

IV. God Bring Indictments and Ultimate Deliverance (6:1-7:20) (Oracle 3)

A. Messages of Reproof and Lament (6:1-7:6)

B. Messages of Confidence and Victory (7:7-20)

MacArthur – “One third of the book targets the sins of the people; another third looks at the punishment of God to come; and another third promises hope the faithful after judgment.” (NASB Study Bible page 1269)

Five Key Verses in the Book Of Micah

This is the word of the LORD – 1:1

Micah's anointing - 3:8; Micah contrasts himself with the false prophets by stating that he is speaking by the power of God's Holy Spirit.

The birthplace of Christ announced – 5:2; The birthplace of David and 1,000 years later, Jesus Christ.

Definition of true religion – 6:8; “What does the LORD Require of you?”

God's disposal of the sins of the believer – 7:18-19; “Who is a God like you?”

Quotations used by others in the Bible from Micah

Jer. 26:16 – The Judean elders quoted Micah 3:12 to save the life of Jeremiah.

Mat. 2:5-6 – The chief priests and scribes quoted Micah 5:2 regarding the birth of Jesus Christ.

Mat. 10:35-36 – Jesus quoted Micah 7:6 in instructing his disciples in the meaning of true discipleship.

I find it interesting that Jeremiah quoted from Micah, which reveals the importance of Micah in his day. Of course, the people paid no more attention to Jeremiah than they had to Micah, and what Micah had prophesied did happen to Jerusalem exactly as he said it would. - J. Vernon McGee